

NOTE ON JUSTIFICATION OF LOCATING THE PROJECT IN FOREST LAND

Mining of a particular ore deposit is always site specific irrespective of the land classification. Sukurangi mining lease of OMC covers an area of **382.709 ha** out of which **267.21 ha** is forest area which is about **69.79 %** of the total ML area. The exploration undertaken so far has proved substantial chromite ore reserve of mostly friable variety, majority of which is confined to forest areas only. The annual average production is targeted to be around **1, 30,000 MT** of chromite ore. This demands continuation of the mining operation in this lease area.

The previous activities were confined to **80.94 ha** of broken up forest land included in **104.79 ha** of forest land over which Stage-II forest clearance has been granted by MoEF, Govt. of India and is valid till 19.09.2020. But as we are planning to go deeper to achieve the planned production of chromite ore, the benches will have to be developed with **25°** slope requiring further virgin forest area in lateral expansion of the quarries. Since the rate of production is fixed at 1.3 lakh MT of chromite ore per annum, the requirement of additional forest area within the M.L. has become inevitable due to the following reasons:

- (a)** The chromite ore body has been proved to be continuing down up to a depth of more than **100 mtr** on Band-IV and to reach that depth lateral expansion by designing safe pit slope (**25°**) require additional lateral area.
- (b)** Due to incompetent nature of the supporting rock strata (Weathered chert limonite), underground development for Band-III and IV on eastern and western limb is still under feasibility study and for which the worked out quarries have not been planned at present to be reclaimed. The lateral extension of northern limb of Band-III and Band-IV require the total forest area on either side of Damsal Nala.

- (c) The time span required to harvest the reserve completely will be around **42** years. This may be reduced with expansion proposal. Even then, extension in the mining lease will be required to win over the mineral completely.

The forest area proposed for mining is the area required for extraction of resources over **42** years, considering area required for proper benching commensurate with the ground contours. Keeping in view the extent of nickeliferous chert limonite that will be generated in the process of raising chromite ore during mining over **42** years, the forest area proposed herein is necessarily required for safe, scientific and systematic working. The continuation and expansion of the mining operations, as proposed, is going to enhance the revenue earnings both for the State and the Central Government. This project is a major source of earnings livelihood for the local tribal community.



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